

I am a voice teacher in Los Angeles with a clientele of professional singers in the pop, rock, R&B, blues, folk and country fields. Many of my clients are household names. I am also a published author of two books about pop singing. I help artists understand and operate within both the craft and the business of music.

I am not an artist any longer but I deal with artists and their efforts to market and sell their CD's. The vast majority of my clients are independent artists who attempt to attract attention through whatever local outlets are available: radio, record sales, press and live shows among others.

For the most part, the programming on our local commercial radio stations is restricted to major artists with major label deals. Only college radio stations are willing to play music from unsigned bands. Furthermore the range of styles played on commercial radio is so tight that a song with an unusual structure, or a style that straddles several genres or a lyric that doesn't fit the formula will never reach the public ear.

I think every station should be required to allow a wider array of music, that there should be a 'homegrown' type of show for every genre. American radio is provincial and narrow minded in comparison with European radio. We rely too heavily on repetition of the same songs over and over to promote sales. Give the public a larger range of styles to choose from. Encourage eclecticism.

The FCC should attempt to formulate a definition of local programming. I don't believe local radio stations (or really, corporate radio stations) will do it on their own without incentive. If you rely on market forces there will be no change from what we are seeing...more and more generic programming.

I think there should be a certain percentage of local programming required. There are artists growing up in every area of the country and they should be encouraged and fostered. They are a treasure. So many musicians write to me asking if they should move to a major city like L.A. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they had enough support in their own area to feel they could stay and continue to prosper?

Bands living, playing and recording locally should be eligible for slots in the radio's regular rotation. And there should be specific shows that focus on local music. I want to see local musicians having access to the airwaves without needing the huge budget that a major label would provide. The playing field needs to be leveled so that talent is the deciding factor, not dollars.

Local stations make no decisions about what is heard on the air. It is handed to them from their corporate offices. Those lists are compiled based on the findings of 'focus groups' who have little to do with what the local population wants.

Stations should be required to play a certain percentage of local content - not just news or the local high school fund raising, but also local music. Radio should be responsible for helping develop the very talent that generates their profits. There are talented artists in every community who are struggling to be heard. Radio will benefit in the long term by helping them be heard locally. That is where each artist starts, in their own community. Radio has not participated in the local community in years.

Thank you for taking my comments on this very important issue.